

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 01970 130831Z

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S E C R E T MOSCOW 1970

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, UR, US

SUBJECT: CPSU APPARATCHIK SIGNALS GO AHEAD ON DETENTE

1. POLITICAL COUNSELOR PAID INTRODUCTORY CALL FEBRUARY 11 ON N.V. MOSTOVETS, CHIEF OF AMERICAN DESK OF INTERNATIONAL SECTION OF CPSU CENTRAL COMMITTEE, WHOSE IMMEDIATE BOSS IS CPSU SECRETARY BORIS PONOMAREV. DURING CALL MOSTOVETS GAVE WHAT WE TAKE TO BE CLEAR OPTIMISTIC SIGNAL FROM PARTY APPARATUS THAT MOSCOW REGARDS CONTINUATION AND EXPANSION OF U.S. - SOVIET DETENTE AS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL. IN THIS REGARD, MOSTOVETS -- WHO HAD RECENTLY RETURNED FROM U.S. VISIT-- NOTED VAST IMPROVEMENT IN AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION TOWARD SOVIET UNION SINCE HIS 1963 U.S. VISIT. HE SAID HE WAS IMPRESSED BY "SHOCK" PROFESSED BY MEMBERS OF "AMERICAN UPPER MIDDLE CLASS" WITH WHOM HE TALKED AT FINAL FORM OF TRADE ACT. AMERICANS HE TALKED TO WERE AWARE OF FORCES IN OPPOSITION TO DETENTE, BUT HAD NOT IMAGINED THEY COULD OVERTURN CAREFUL EFFORTS OF PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY. MOSTOVETS WAS FURTHER ENCOURAGED BY STATEMENTS OF MANY AMERICAN BUSINESS LEADERS AGAINST DISCRIMINATORY CLAUSES IN TRADE ACT. HE NOTED PRESIDENT'S RESERVATIONS AT SIGNING OF BILL AND DISSATISFACTION OF LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES OVER PROVISIONS OF BILL. MOSTOVETS FELT THESE FACTORS FAVORED AN EVENTUAL AMENDMENT OF THE TRADE ACT BY CONGRESS.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 MOSCOW 01970 130831Z

BUT SOVIETS ARE NOT CLEAR ON HOW AND IN WHAT FORM ACCOMMO-

DATION COULD TAKE PLACE. LINKAGE OF CREDITS AND MFN ESPECIALLY IRKED SOVIETS, HE SAID, AND ANYTHING THAT COULD BE DONE TO DECOUPLE THESE ITEMS WOULD BE HELPFUL.

2. MOSTOVETS EMPHASIZED, TRADE BILL PROBLEMS ASIDE, THAT IT IS VITAL TO BUILD ON ALREADY GOOD RELATIONS, WIDEN CONTACTS, AND INCREASE GENERAL UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES. SOVIET PEOPLE WERE ALMOST UNANIMOUS IN SUPPORT OF IMPROVEMENT OF U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS, HE SAID. MAIN TASK OF OUR TIME, HE SAID, IS TO AVOID WAR AT ALL COSTS. THIS IS NOT JUST THE POLICY OF BREZHNEV BUT OF ENTIRE SOVIET PEOPLE. MUCH HAS ALREADY BEEN ACCOMPLISHED IN THIS REGARD, SUCH AS TREATY BARRING NUCLEAR WAR, BUT MUCH YET REMAINS TO BE DONE. SOVIETS ARE DETERMINED TO MOVE FORWARD ON THIS, HE SAID.

3. MOSTOVETS SAID THAT GREATEST DANGER TO OUR RELATIONSHIP AT PRESENT LIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST. HOWEVER, EVEN HERE HE WAS OPTIMISTIC THAT IN THE LONG RUN ARAB AND ISRAELI POSITIONS WOULD BE MODIFIED TO FIND A COMMON MEETING GROUND. GREAT PROGRESS HAD ALREADY BEEN MADE, HE SAID. THE ARABS HAVE CHANGED THEIR APPROACH AND WOULD CONTINUE TO DO SO. ONLY A FEW YEARS AGO THEY COMPLETELY REFUSED TO ACCEPT THE IDEA OF ISRAEL'S EXISTENCE. NOW THEY ARE WILLING TO SIT DOWN WITH THE ISRAELIS AND DISCUSS THE MIDDLE EAST SITUATION AT THE GENEVA CONFERENCE, HE SAID.

4. MOSTOVETS RESPONDED TO A QUESTION ABOUT THE CURRENT STATE OF BREZHNEV'S HEALTH BY STATING THAT BREZHNEV WAS TAKING A NECESSARY REST (OTDYKH) - "BUT, OF COURSE, UNDER APPROPRIATE MEDICAL SUPERVISION." HE CITED THE STRAIN OF CONSTANT WORK SUFFERED BY THE TOP LEADERS AND SAID THAT EVEN VACATIONS OFFERED NO REAL REST SINCE PAPERS HAD TO BE READ AND VISITORS MET. THIS WAS NOT ONLY TRUE OF BREZHNEV, BUT OF ALL THE TOP LEADERS. "MY BOSS PONOMAREV" HAS THE SAME PROBLEM, MOSTOVETS SAID. IN FACT, HE SAID THAT ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE HAD ORDERED BREZHNEV TO TAKE A VACATION, BUT EVEN THOSE WERE INTERRUPTED BY MEETINGS WITH LEADERS OF SOCIALIST COUNTRIES.

5. MOSTOVETS WROTE OFF AS SPECULATION THE MANY STORIES IN FOREIGN NEWSPAPERS ABOUT BREZHNEV'S ALLEGED ILLNESSES.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 MOSCOW 01970 130831Z

HOWEVER, HE DID STRESS THAT BASIC FOREIGN POLICIES ASSOCIATED WITH BREZHNEV HAD BEEN SET BY THE 24TH PARTY CONGRESS IN THE PEACE PROGRAM AND THAT THIS HAD THE FULL SUPPORT OF ALL THE TOP LEADERS. HE ALSO REFERRED TO THE SOVIET-AMERICAN SUMMIT THIS SUMMER, SAID THAT BREZHNEV WOULD BE LEADING THE SOVIET TEAM, AND STATED THAT HE EXPECTED THIS SUMMIT TO MAKE A MAJOR CONTRIBUTION TO U.S. - SOVIET DETENTE.

6. MOSTOVETS ALSO DISCUSSED EMIGRATION (SEPTEL) AND ANSWERED QUESTIONS ABOUT PARTY AFFAIRS AND FUNCTION OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE SECRETARIAT, WHICH WILL BE DESCRIBED AT LENGTH IN SEPARATE AIRGRAM. HE CONFIRMED IN THIS REGARD THAT THE 25TH PARTY CONGRESS WILL BE HELD IN 1976. MOSTOVETS WAS FRIENDLY AND SOFT-SPOKEN, AND MADE IT CLEAR THAT FURTHER CONTACTS ARE WELCOME. CONVERSATION LASTED HOUR AND A HALF.

7. COMMENT: MOSTOVETS IS OFFICIAL RESPONSIBLE FOR PREPARING REPORTS ON UNITED STATES WHICH ARE ROUTED TO BREZHNEV AND OTHER POLITBURO LEADERS. AS SUCH, HE IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT AND THE GENERAL LINE HE ADOPTED WAS HIGHLY ENCOURAGING. STOESEL

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